



Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 22, 2004
Wisconsin Rapids City Council Chambers
9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

LRSC Members Present

Wisconsin Counties Association:

Dick Leffler
Ron Rutkowski
Emmer Shields

Wisconsin Towns Association:

Marilyn Bhend
Arlyn Helm
Gene Lueck
Marv Samson

Regional Planning Commissions/

Metro Planning Organizations:

Bob Beglinger (for Ken Yunker)
Don Kush
Walt Raith

League of Wisconsin Municipalities:

Bill Handlos
Dennis Melvin
Dave Waffle

WisDOT Staff Present:

Scott Bush
Rod Clark
Steve Coons
Jim Donlin
Michael Erickson
Suzie Forde
Mary Forlenza

Wisconsin Alliance of Cities:

Dave Botts
Chris Fornal (for Jeff Polenske)
Paula Vandehey

Others Present:

Mike Hess
Tracey McKenney (FHWA)

LRSC Members Excused:

Bill Beil, Jr. (LWM)
Dan Fedderly (WCA)
Rick Jones (WAC)
Jerry Mentzel (WisDOT)

Opening Business (Don Kush, Mary Forlenza)

The meeting was called to order shortly after 9 a.m.

Dan Fedderly will join the Council at the September 23rd meeting.

Review & Approval of May 27th minutes

Mary Forlenza will be sending out the May 27th after some further editing of the text.

Recap of meeting with WisDOT Administrator Mark Wolfgram to discuss concerns about *Connection 2030* (Don, Executive Committee)

Mark re-affirmed WisDOT's initial commitment to incorporate a local roads element and use WISLR data in the plan. Mark agreed that many of the issues raised by the council during the May 27th meeting were important, and that WisDOT still needs to develop these components more before we continue any more discussions. For the most part, the Executive Committee liked what they heard at the meeting, but is looking forward to what type of action occurs to support the discussions. Specific concerns raised by the Executive Committee:

- Preservation/Safety is a priority of the plan vs. capacity issues or a discussion concerning over-weight trucks on the system.
- Communities that are planning ahead and officially mapping future improvements; how will these be incorporated or identified in the proposed corridor approach?
- How will the plan address program delivery, cutting costs and other system preservation issues?
- The issue of how the District offices interact with locals in their planning processes and local transportation problems, and lack of consistency between Districts.

Mark will be at the September meeting to discuss this further and provide a framework for how WisDOT will proceed with local issues in *Connections 2030*.

Finance Committee Update (Rod Clark for Rick Jones)

The two major efforts currently underway include:

- Updating the GTA purpose statement. (Handout)
- Discussions of changes to GTA program related to the upcoming legislative session, how can the LRSC help address or influence this process?

Currently no language concerning the purpose of the GTA program exists in the statute (§ 86.30), and the Council is requesting this revised language is added to the statute. An updated version of the language was presented to the LRSC for approval. The Finance Committee unanimously adopted this language with its revisions when it last met and recommends that the Council accept the revised version. **A motion was made for its consideration and approval, and after some discussion, was unanimously passed.**

A letter will be sent to the Secretary informing his office of the changes the LRSC is proposing from the 12/98 GTA Purpose Statement draft, and request his endorsement of these changes. If

accepted by the Secretary, the Council would like this revision forwarded to the Governor's office for legislative action and approval. Local associations will be copied on the correspondence. The reasons the GTA purpose statement is so important:

- Secretary's office is aware of the legislature's concern about accountability of these funds, and it is hoped the revised language will help keep the discussion under control.
- Make clear to the legislature and local officials the intent and purpose of these funds.
- Make clear that GTA Funds are not another form of shared revenue, and are only to be used for the maintenance, operation and construction of local roads, streets and highways.

Revisions to the GTA brochure are continuing and a draft for review will be available at the September meeting.

The Finance Committee also focused on ideas that could tie future GTA funding to more accountability by local governments, and is developing an Incentive Proposal to encourage asset management by locals. This fits nicely with the broader theme of local accountability across the board, not just in GTA.

The proposal is being structured based on the following goals:

Short Term: GTA revised purpose statement, inclusion in statute and next budget cycle.

Medium Term: Develop ideas to tie incentives to current requirements concerning the pavement management system (WISLR & Paserware).

Long Term: What does asset management really mean? How can it be used at the local and state level to help in the budgeting process? This will include providing information on the importance of asset management and how local governments in the future can use this for their budgeting, maintenance, and reconstruction processes.

WisDOT's Secretary's Office is very supportive of the LRSC working with local governments on these issues and the concept of an incentive concept help educate and increase participation in the current asset management requirements. They did raise the concern that a proposal must recognize that local governments might oppose this and view it as an unfunded mandate. The group also needs to keep the Governor informed of how this program would be developed and implemented. The Secretary likes the concept and is willing to work with the LRSC once the details have been more formalized.

The incentive concept in its rudimentary form would offer a one or one and one-half percent increase to the GTA funding to a local government if they provided the asset management information in a timely manner and/or in an automated format. Funding for this would come from inflationary increases in GTA funding, not from current program levels. **The LRSC unanimously passed a motion endorsing development of this approach (Handout), including the need to get this out to the local associations to build buy in and support.**

The Finance Committee has developed an issue paper that will be distributed to the local associations concerning this potential incentive program. The issue will go back to the Finance Committee for continued work, and members of the LRSC will talk to the local associations to get their feedback and ideas to help develop this idea.

Education & Communication Committee Update (Dave Waffle)

The LRSC brochure has been finalized and a sample of the brochure was distributed to the LRSC. Accomplishments and information was updated and the color scheme has been changed to clearly indicate the update. Brochures with inserts will be distributed to members at the September meeting.

The Summer Newsletter has been finalized and will be distributed by the first week in August.

The Biennial Report outline was distributed at the last meeting, and Chair Don Kush will be writing the report with assistance of the other committee chairs. The report will be completed this fall, in anticipation of the Council leadership's year-end meeting with Secretary Busalacchi.

Regulatory, Environmental & Legislative Committee (Emmer Shields)

Emmer distributed a letter (handout) for WisDOT and DNR Secretaries concerning reform for the environmental regulatory process for local transportation projects. The three key proposals include:

- A Single Point of Contact System within the DNR and DOT.
- A Consolidated Local Transportation Permit Program.
- A "Local Transportation" Advisory Council to the DNR.

The LRSC moved and unanimously approved the letter. The Wisconsin County Highway Association (WCHA) and the Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA) support this proposal. The REAL Committee is still unsure where the municipalities stand on the proposal, and will continue to monitor and report on progress.

Emmer updated the Council on the oversize/overweight trucking issue. He provided a descriptive interpretation on the variables to "Highway Longevity" and what those inputs consist of: Weather, Soil, Funding (\$)/ Improvement cycle, Design, Construction and Loading of vehicles (Trucks). By examining these inputs, Emmer then broke out the inputs that get the most attention and least attention when viewed as a controllable factor. The controllable input with that gets the most attention is Funding (\$)/ Improvement cycle, and the controllable input that get the least attention is Loading of vehicles (Trucks). From this simple examination of inputs, the LRSC needs to educate and explain to the legislature that new policies must be created to help control truck loading.

A policy that is self-regulating would be the most cost effective and simplest to enforce. It is envisioned that this policy would consist of various truck reconfigurations for heavier weights and stiffer penalties for those who violate the new regulations. By imposing stiffer penalties or restrictions on the use of these non-conforming trucks, it is believed that the industries (logging – farming) would work to self regulate their industries. As frequently discussed, the current system is not working and enforcement in many of the northern parts of the state is nearly non-existent. The Legislature has granted many exceptions and exclusions to business for various reasons, and is only exasperating the problem and limiting enforcement of the current rules.

Dick Leffler suggested that their needs to be some form of incentive to local law enforcement agencies to help with this problem. Some form of payback to the local government either through fines redistributed to that agency or some other incentive program yet to be determined as the LRSC concerns move forward on this issue. The Counties are working with the raw forest products industry and Rep. Ainsworth and working to develop model legislation that they will endorse. The proposal is being drafted.

At the meeting in September, WisDOT Executive Assistant Randy Romanski and his counterpart from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will update the LRSC on discussions regarding overweight ag vehicles, and to better understand those concerns from a local roads perspective.

Infrastructure Management Committee (Paula Vandehey – Susie Forde/Scott Bush)

Susie gave an overview of the current 2003 Pavement Rating Submittals to WISLR (Presentation).

As of July 20, 2004:

- 1,821 municipalities in compliance.
- 102 municipalities non-compliance.
- Statewide Load Statistics: March 2004 = 1,012 municipalities (57%)
July 2004 = 1,662 municipalities (93%)

The Rated/Unrated miles loaded from the 2003 submittals:

- Unpaved miles totaled 15,548 with 65% of those miles having pavement ratings.
- Paved miles totaled 46,174 with 60% of those miles having pavement ratings.

The success rate for loading on the first cycle has varied from 0% to 100% for reasons already discussed with the LRSC. Various initiatives are going to take place in the coming months to help improve this loading process. These initiatives include:

- Development of a tip sheet for users to help identify specific examples of problems that occur when submitting WISLR data.
- Contacting the locals where problems are occurring.
- Public outreach efforts at local associations conferences – WTA October 2004 – Appleton.
- Creation of a Computer Based Training (CBT) system and a Web Based Training (WBT) System in the coming months. Test CD's will be available at our September meeting.

What we can expect in the near future from WISLR:

- Individual County/Village/Towns Needs Analysis by the end of July 2004.
- County and Statewide Needs Analysis by the end of September 2004.
- Comprehensive Presentation to LRSC in September 2004 to review these products.

WISLR staff will be working diligently to make the 2005 submittals as simple as possible. With Paserware 3.0 being introduced and available for this cycle, both compliance and successful loading of the pavement ratings percentages should increase.

WISLR Pavement tools for individual communities are still being developed but will be completed by the September meeting. WisDOT is in the final stages of these elements:

- Revising default cost information.
- Revising Algorithm for Statewide Needs Analysis. This also includes estimating when no rating data is available.
- Developing County and Statewide viewing options for needs analysis (Scott will talk about this next).
- Continued, ongoing testing.

Joe Nestler will demonstrate the Rudimentary Pavement Analyses Tools for WISLR at the September meeting.

Scott Bush reviewed the on-going development (second version) of the pavement data sorts that may be created and available for use through the WISLR program (handout). The matrix of data sorts was developed by discussions that have occurred at both the Infrastructure Management Committee meeting in June and a review of the process by the LRSC. The basis for these sorts is to use the information to generate the basic patterns or trends in the data, so it is useful to end-users. Once you have completed these initial sorts, then you can examine the data further and develop some cause and effect information from specific data.

The first of two data components that were dropped from this sorting process was Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). This occurred because the data is incomplete in WISLR and not consistent across the state. The second was a soils or environmental component (slope information) that is very challenging to create and program into the database. Steve Pudloski from the UW-TIC has offered to continue work on this component.

LRSC comments:

Can you do multiple queries on the various sorts? Answer – Yes, you will be able to query data on more than one or more category.

Will we be putting in the cost per mile for particular types of surface types by area? Answer – this could be created, but would require a lot of programming work, and might create some confusion with policy makers not knowing the background factors affecting those costs (i.e. environmental issues caused by soils). We might revisit this in the future, but are not currently developing on this scale.

Community class size of population tiers (Under 5,000, 5,000 – 50,000, and over 50,000). This is an arbitrary breakdown because when looking at class of city or type, there is no breakdown by population. You might have a city with less than 5,000 or more than 5,000, or it could be a village or town. We may want to examine this again after we have the program in place and in use.

Rod asked if we could create a query that would allow the user to input any population size rather than a set tier? Scott was not sure if this could be programmed. Dave Waffle said that U.W. Extension has a program available concerning the financial data from the Form C's for each

local government and can break it out in such a manner. We may want to check into this and find out if we can use that program language to add this feature.

Federal Highway Administration Review of Wisconsin Federal Local Programs (Tracey McKenney – FHWA)

Tracey informed the LRSC that the FHWA would be reviewing a sample of FHWA programs at the district level in Wisconsin. The districts that would be reviewed included Districts: 2,3,4 and 5. These would not be full program audits, but rather a review of performance and environmental compliance by the agencies receiving these grants. FHWA is reviewing how they administer these programs and are examining possible changes to how the programs are delivered. This is the first step in that process, and nothing has been determined as to what might occur in the future.

Locals and their associations will be interviewed as well. Tracey will bring FHWA's results back to the Council by the end of the year.

Reauthorization (Federal Funding Appropriation Bill) Update (Jim Donlin – WisDOT)

The House and the Senate are at an impasse on the current bill for a new 6-year resolution. The Senate version is \$318 billion, the House version is \$279 billion and the President has offered his version at \$256 billion. Many of the differences have been worked out in committee (92 separate differences) but a final funding amount is what is needed for the parties to agree to settle. It is almost certain that before the Congress adjourns for the summer that a 4th extension will be voted on and approved.

After Congress returns to Washington the two other hurdles that will need to be addressed for a final bill to be approved (besides funding amount) will be the issue of minimum guarantee return of federal gas monies back to the states, and environmental rule making concerning transportation projects.

Ninety percent of WisDOT's (2005 –07) budget has been developed. The DNR/DOT streamlining proposal would move forward during this budget cycle and has the support of the Governor. The GTA incentive proposal might make it in but that it needs to be fully developed and have full support by the associations before the Secretary would like to move it forward. The Finance Committee will be working on this and sending the proposal out to all the association directors to gain their support.

Tribes and WisDOT Program Eligibility (Mary Forlenza)

Mary and Scott attended a Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) meeting in late June set up by WisDOT's Bureau of Equity and Environmental Services (BEES) to discuss tribal eligibility for federal and particularly state transportation programs. The meeting was an excellent dialogue between the tribal representatives and WisDOT.

Mary shared what was discussed, including an overview of WisDOT's local (State & Federal) programs, tribal eligibility, and the local road certification process. Mary shared Wisconsin's Tribal Road Mileage Inventory with the group (handout). From the tribal road inventory, of the

4,550 total miles of roads on tribal reservations, only 282 miles would be eligible for some type of local transportation program funding. And of those 282 miles, 207 miles are located on the Lac du Flambeau Reservation.

Tribes currently have many income sources and it is unclear if they would want to participate in these programs given the cost reporting expenses and requirements needed to obtain these additional funding sources to maintain their local road network. Currently the tribes have no consistent cost reporting system between reservations and because of that no estimated GTA payment is possible due to this unreliable cost information. If the Tribes want to participate in these programs they are eligible, but would need to create a consistent cost reporting system and meet all other state and federal requirements. It is unclear if and when the tribes will be requesting these funds based on our conversation.

Closing Business

Agenda topics for September 23rd Council Meeting

- Randy Romanski / DATCP will be address the LRSC on concerns about over-weight ag vehicles on the local system and to better understand those concerns from a local roads perspective.
- Mark Wolfram will provide a follow-up to our on-going discussions concerning Connection 2030's long range planning effort by WisDOT.
- Tracey McKenney – FHWA will report on the preliminary findings for the Federal Local Program Review that is being undertaken in Wisconsin.
- Joe Nestler will demonstrate the Rudimentary Pavement Analyses Tools for WISLR and Susie Forde will bring demo CD's of the WISLR training materials.
- Steve Pudloski will demonstrate the final version of Paserware 3.0

Meeting Was Adjourned at 2:40pm

